

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 7008

S E C R E T CAIRO 9969

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FOR THE SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR EG IS US

SUBJECT: IMPLEMENTATION OF AGREEMENT

REF: STATE 237190 CAIRO 9941 CAIRO 9967

1. AS RESULT OF UNSYG'S HESITATION, CONFUSION HAS REIGNED SUPREME HERE ALL DAY LONG, BUT SEEMS FINALLY TO HAVE BEEN STRAIGHTENED OUT.

2. MOBIL'S INSTRUCTIONS CONTAINED STATE 236396 AND REVISED IN STATE 237193 PASSED ON TO LOCAL MOBIL REPS. LATE THIS AFTERNOON MOBIL REP SAWTELLE, CALLED ON ME TO RELATE DISCUSSIONS HE HAD EARLIER IN THE DAY WITH EGYPTIAN MILITARY RE ARRANGEMENTS FOR ESCORT OF MOBIL GROUP TO RAS SUDAR. AT THAT TIME, EGYPTIAN MILITARY STATED MOBIL TEAM WOULD ONLY BE ESCORTED BY UNEF AS FAR AS BORDER OF BUFFER ZONE WHERE THEY WOULD BE TURNED OVER TO ISRAELIS. ONLY WHEN US CONGRESS HAD ACTED AND PROTOCOL WAS SIGNED BY ISRAELIS WOULD UNEF GO INTO OIL FIELD AREA. EGYPTIAN MILITARY INDICATED SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT WAS AGREEABLE TO THEM.

3. SAWTELLE RESPONDED HE WOULD HAVE TO CHECK THIS OUT WITH HIS NEW YORK OFFICE BEFORE GOING AHEAD UNDER THESE CONDITIONS. HIS AMERICAN TECHNICIANS,

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HE STATED, HAVE MISGIVINGS ABOUT GOING IN UNLESS

THERE IS UNEF PROTECTION. HE WAS LEAVING IT ENTIRELY UP TO THEM TO DECIDE, BUT DOUBTED THEY WOULD GO. SUBSEQUENTLY, MILITARY ADVISOR TO MINPET, GENERAL ABDUL MAGD, CALLED SAWTELLE TO SAY THAT FAHMY WAS DIRECTLY APPEALING TO UN FOR UNEF TO ACCOMPANY MOBIL TEAM. SAWTELLE SAID HE WAS TRYING TO GET IN TOUCH WITH MOBIL BOARD MEMBERS NOW MEETING IN ARIZONA FOR GUIDANCE BUT HAD AS YET BEEN UNABLE TO DO SO.

4. I BRIEFED SAWTELLE ON STATE OF PLAY AS WE KNEW IT AT THE TIME. I SUGGESTED THAT IF EGYPTIANS ARE AGREEABLE TO MOBIL TEAM GOING TO RAS SUDAR UNDER ISRAELI PROTECTION, I THOUGHT AMERICAN TECHNICIANS COULD BE SURE THEY WOULD BE AS SAFE AS IF UNEF WERE THERE. I HAD IMPRESSION WASHINGTON SHARED THIS VIEW. SAWTELLE LISTENED, BUT REMAINED SKEPTICAL. HE AGAIN EXPRESSED DOUBTS THAT HIS PEOPLE WOULD BE WILLING TO GO IN UNDER THOSE CONDITIONS. AS WE WERE TALKING, SAWTELLE RECEIVED CALL FROM HIS OFFICE REPORTING THAT ABDUL MAGD HAD JUST PHONED TO ASK THAT MOBIL TEAM ASSEMBLE AT UNEF HEADQUARTERS IN HELIOPOLIS AT 2200 HOURS THIS EVENING. THEY WOULD LEAVE FROM THERE FOR SUEZ AND TOMORROW FOR RAS SUDAR AND BE ACCOMPANIED ALL THE WAY BY A UN LIAISON OFFICER.

5. ALTHOUGH PLEASED TO HEAR THIS, SAWTELLE FELT HE STILL NEEDED DIRECT UNEF CONFIRMATION OF THESE ARRANGEMENTS. HE NOTED EGYPTIANS, DESPITE FREQUENT PROMISES, HAD NOT YET PUT MOBIL IN DIRECT TOUCH WITH UNEF. I THEREFORE ARRANGED THAT HE CALL UNEF HEADQUARTERS, WHICH HE DID FROM MY OFFICE. UNEF LIAISON OFFICER CONFIRMED ABOVE DIRECTLY TO SAWTELLE. TENTATIVE SCHEDULE IS FOR MOBIL GROUP, ACCOMPANIED BY UNEF OFFICER AND EGYPTIANS, TO PROCEED TO SUEZ TONIGHT, OVERNIGHT THERE, CROSS CANAL SUNDAY MORNING AND PROCEED TO BUFFER ZONE. AT 1600 LOCAL SUNDAY, MOBIL TEAM WILL PROCEED FROM BUFFER

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ZONE TO RAS SUDAR. THEY WILL BE ACCOMPANIED AT ALL TIMES BY UNEF PERSONNEL, WHO WILL REMAIN WITH THEM.

6. SAWTELLE WAS MUCH RELIEVED AND, IN MY PRESENCE, GAVE INSTRUCTIONS THAT HIS PEOPLE ASSEMBLE AT HELIOPOLIS THIS EVENING FOR THE TRIP TO SUEZ. INSHA'ALLAH, ALL WILL NOW GO WELL.

7. SUGGEST DEPARTMENT PASS THIS MESSAGE TO TEL AVIV.

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